

## AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (currently amended) A method for applying a coating to a surface of an item substrate, said method comprising:

providing a die having a cavity and an aperture, said aperture having a collection surface and a parallel surface;

providing a substantially rigid ~~substrate~~ item for coating, wherein a cross-sectional configuration of said item corresponds to a cross-sectional configuration of said aperture of said die; ~~forming said substrate to have a substantially uniform cross-sectional profile;~~

feeding a coating material into said cavity of said die;

using said collection surface as a receiving channel that collects said coating material in said cavity for application onto a surface of said item; ~~pushing said substrate through an aperture of a substrate coating device, said aperture substantially conforming to said cross-sectional profile of said substrate; and~~

applying, ~~with said substrate coating device,~~ said coating material to said surface of said item by passing said item through said cavity and said aperture of said die, wherein said parallel surface is parallel to said surface of said item.

2. (currently amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising a step of heating at least a portion of said item substrate to a temperature greater than ~~an~~ ambient temperature.

3. (currently amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising a step of treating at least a portion of said substantially rigid items~~substrate~~.

4. (currently amended) The method of claim 3, wherein said step of treating comprises at least one ~~is selected from the group consisting of~~ :

(i) applying a high pressure steam cleaning to said item;

(ii) applying a high pressure air cleaning to said item;

(iii) applying a solvent cleaning to said item;

(iv) applying a water bath cleaning to said item;

(v) cooling said item;

(vi) stacking said item; and

(vii) cutting said ~~substrate~~ item into desired lengths.

5. (currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein said providing a substantially rigid ~~substrate~~ item further comprises providing a plurality of substantially rigid non-continuous ~~substrate~~ items for passing in series through said cavity and said aperature of said die.

6. (currently amended) The method of claim 2, wherein said heating said ~~substrate~~ item further comprises heating said ~~substrate~~ item to a temperature substantially greater than said ambient temperature to promote a bond with said coating material.

7. (currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein said applying said coating material to said surface of said item comprises coating said ~~substrate~~ item with said coating

material such that said coating material comprises a substantially uniform thickness in the range of 0.001 inches to 0.250 inches on said surface of said item.

8. (currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein said coating material is comprises at least one selected from the group consisting of (i) an acrylics, (ii) a poly-vinyl chlorides (P.V.C.), (iii) an A.B.S., (iv) a polyesters, polypropylenes, (v) an A.S.A., and (vi) a nylons.

9. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein said coating material comprises a thermal plastic.

10. (currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein said coating material comprises a pigmentation.

11. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein said coating material comprises an absence of pigmentation.

12. (currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein said ~~pushing step~~ passing said item through said cavity and said aperture is an automated process.

13. (currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein said passing said item through said cavity and said aperture ~~pushing step~~ is a manual process.

14. (currently amended) A method for applying a coating material to one or more of a plurality of items in series~~non-continuous substrate~~, said method comprising:

providing a two-part die having a cavity and an aperture, said aperture having a collection surface and a parallel surface;

providing a non-continuous, substantially rigid substrate item for coating, wherein a cross-sectional configuration of said item corresponds to a cross-sectional configuration of said aperture of said die~~having a substantially uniform cross-sectional profile;~~

feeding a coating material into said cavity of said die;

using said collection surface as a receiving channel that collects said coating material in said cavity for application onto a surface of said item; ~~providing a substrate coating device having a first aperture substantially conforming to said cross-sectional profile and a second aperture larger than, but conforming to, said first aperture, wherein said substrate coating device further comprises a substrate coating material to coat said substrate when said substrate is passed through said first and said second apertures; heating said substrate to a temperature substantially greater than an ambient temperature; and~~

applying said coating material to said surface of said item by passing said item through said cavity and said aperture of said die, wherein said parallel surface is parallel to said surface of said item ~~pushing said substrate through said first and second apertures of said substrate coating device to coat at least a portion thereof.~~

15. (currently amended) The method of claim 14, further comprising a step of pre-treating said substrate.

16. (currently amended) The method of claim 15, wherein said step of pre-treating is ~~selected from the group consisting~~ comprises at least one of (i) applying a high pressure steam cleaning to said item, (ii) applying a high pressure air cleaning to said item, (iii) providing a solvent cleaning to said item, (iv) providing a water bath cleaning to said item, (v) cooling said item, stacking, and (vi) cutting said substrate item into desired lengths.

17. (currently amended) The method of claim 14, wherein said non-continuous ~~substrate item~~ comprises a plurality of substrate-discrete item lengths, each substrate-discrete item length having a substantially identical cross-sectional profile configuration.

18. (currently amended) The method of claim 17, wherein said ~~pushing-passing~~ said substrate item further comprises passing ~~pushing~~ each of said plurality of substrate-discrete item lengths through said cavity and said aperture of said die first and second apertures of said substrate-coating device in series.

19. (cancelled)

20. (currently amended) The method of claim ~~19~~ 14, wherein said step of applying said coating material ~~further comprises applying coating said substrate with said coating material such that said coating material comprises a substantially uniform thickness of said coating material in the range of 0.001 inches to 0.250 inches on said surface of said item.~~

21. (currently amended) The method of claim 14, wherein said coating material is comprises at least one selected from the group consisting of (i) an acrylics, (ii) a poly-vinyl chlorides (P.V.C.), (iii) an A.B.S., (iv) a polyesters, (v) a polypropylenes, (vi) an A.S.A., and (vii) a nylons.

22. (currently amended) The method of claim 14, wherein said coating material comprises a thermal plastic.

23. (currently amended) The method of claim 14, wherein said coating material comprises a pigmentation.

24. (previously presented) The method of claim 14, wherein said coating material comprises an absence of pigmentation.